

*"There is an order that encircles the man, the woman and  
the child, everlasting and pure. Silently within the man  
speaks the love and respect for life.*

*It is echoed in the woman,  
it is witnessed by the child."*

*--Chief Dan George, Co-Salish Tribe*

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## **FETAL ALCOHOL SYNDROME/FETAL ALCOHOL EFFECTS IN NATIVE COMMUNITIES:**

### **A FATHER'S ROLE IN PREVENTION**

Native American Women's Health Education Resource Center  
P.O. Box 572  
Lake Andes, SD 57356-0572  
(605) 487-7072





## What is Fetal Alcohol Syndrome?

A preventable and irreversible birth defect caused by a mother drinking alcohol during pregnancy.

Typical symptoms of FAS are:

- \*Abnormal, deformed facial features
- \*Heart, lung, liver and kidney deformities
- \*Mental retardation
- \*Low birthweight and small adult size
- \*Behavioral and personality problems

*Fetal Alcohol Effects/Fetal Alcohol Birth - When a child possesses one or more of the symptoms of FAS as a result of parental drinking before or during pregnancy.*

## How can a father's drinking lead to Fetal Alcohol Effects?

Alcohol can both lower sperm count and lower the quality and viability of once healthy sperm.

Paternal drinking may result in offspring with low birthweight and/or cleft palate.

## How can men help to fight FAS?

- ⊕ Although Fetal Alcohol Syndrome is directly caused by a mother drinking alcohol during her pregnancy, men too must become accountable for the health of their babies.
- ⊕ Offer emotional support to your wife/companion throughout her pregnancy so that she does not feel alone and tempted to drink.
- ⊕ Set a good example by not smoking, drinking, or doing drugs yourself.
- ⊕ Remind and encourage your wife/companion to visit her doctor regularly throughout her pregnancy.
- ⊕ Make a commitment to insure the health of your unborn child.

## FETAL ALCOHOL SYNDROME CAN BE PREVENTED!

For more information: The Native American Women's Health Education Resource Center  
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Other information on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome available from the Native American Women's Health Education Resource Center:

Know the Facts About Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (pamphlet)  
How Your Baby is Affected if You Drink Alcohol During  
Pregnancy (pamphlet)  
FAS: A Global Issue (video)